

# Reformed Theology – Class 4

## THE GOD OF GRACE

### GOD'S REDEEMING PLAN

Adam as our representative chose to lead mankind in rebellion against our creator. Faced with a fallen world we could say God had four options:

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#### 1. Salvation is God's Choice—Election

The Bible clearly teaches that God decided to intervene and save some people. Those people He predestined or elected to be eternally saved.

- Ephesians 1:4 tells us we were chosen by God before the foundation of the world.
- Ephesians 1:5 says we were predestined to be adopted as sons of God.
- Romans 8:28-30 tells us that everyone predestined to be saved by God will in fact be glorified.
- John 15:16; 1 John 4:19; & 2 Thessalonians 2:13 make it clear that our salvation is not a result of our initiatives, "we love Him because He first loved us."
- Acts 13:48 shows that when people choose God it is only because God has ordained them to choose Him.

The Bible states clearly that God's choice of certain men is not based on any virtuous quality or act foreseen in men. Romans 9:11-16 clearly tells us that God chose between Jacob and Esau before either was even born and before either had done anything good or bad. Ephesians 2:8, 9 destroys the notion that God foresaw who would have faith and then elected them. God did foresee who would have faith because He had chosen to give it to them.

#### 2. Is Election Unfair?

In the face of objectors who argue that if the doctrine of election is true then God is unfair, we should be reminded that God has never treated all men equally.

#### 3. God chooses

The belief that the ultimate cause of our salvation is God's choice of us and not our choice of Him was passionately held by the Reformers.

## REDEMPTION ACCOMPLISHED

### 1. Mediator of Covenant of Grace

The offices of:

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### 2. Certain Number

Jesus, from all eternity was given by God a people to save, the number of which is certain, definite, and unchangeable. His mediatorial work was not intended to provide an opportunity for all men to be saved, but was intended to actually accomplish the salvation of those He came to redeem.

- Matthew 1:21 tells us Jesus came to save His people from their sins.
- John 6:37-39 clearly teaches that the Father gave to the Son a definite number to be saved.
- In Christ's high priestly prayer in John 17:9, Jesus doesn't pray for the whole world, but for those whom thou has given me...
- John 10:11 says the Good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep, not for the goats.

### 3. Atonement

The Arminian believes the atonement makes salvation available for all, but this conception means that Christ's death doesn't secure anyone's salvation.

#### Spurgeon's Q and A

Reformed theologians are told we limit the atonement of Christ because we say Christ did not pay for all men's sins.

A = Arminian

R = Reformed

A: Christ died for all men.

R: What do you mean by that?

R: Did Christ die to secure the salvation of all men?

A: No, because that would mean universalism.

R: Did Christ die to secure the salvation of any man in particular?

A: No, because Christ died to make salvation available for all men not anyone in particular.

A: Christ died so that *any* man may be saved if they follow the conditions of salvation (faith).  
*Christ died to make salvation available for everyone.*

The Arminian view is saying that Christ did not die to secure the salvation of anyone. So, Christ's death only makes it possible but by no means secures it for anyone since it is dependent on man's choice. So the Arminian, *limits the power of the cross to save*. Christ therefore is not a savior because he does not secure salvation for anyone. He only makes it possible. He is not a savior but merely a hoping salesman. The power is not in the cross or the Savior but in the hands of man who chooses Christ.

The Reformed view is saying that Christ died only for the elect. He died only for his sheep. He saves them by his death for them. He is a Savior that truly saves by securing the elect.

## REDEMPTION APPLIED

1. All those whom Christ died to save, God is pleased to effectually call to Himself.
  - John 6:44-45. All that the Father has given to Christ the Father draws to Christ.
  - Acts 16:14. God opens Lydia's heart.
  - Romans 8:28-30 tells us that all whom God chooses He saves; none who are called fail to come.
  - John 3:1-8. No man is regenerated without the work of the Holy Spirit.
  - Ezekiel 36:24-28. The Holy Spirit is a heart surgeon, He changes our sin nature.

The effectual inward call of the Holy Spirit should be distinguished from the outward/universal call which we are to extend to all men. This is the challenge to all to repent and believe.

The Bible gives hope for the salvation of those who perish unable to cognitively respond to the outward call of the gospel.

*"The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance." (2 Peter 3:9).*

"The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance." 2 Peter 3:9

"How can we square this verse with predestination? If **it** is not the will of God to elect everyone unto salvation, how can the Bible then say that God is not willing that any should perish?

The text says more than simply that God is not willing that any should perish. The whole clause is important: "but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance."

What is the antecedent of *any*? It is clearly *us*. Does *us* refer to all of us humans? Or does **it** refer to us Christians, the people of God? Peter is fond of speaking of the elect as a special

group of people. I think what he is saying here is that God does not will that any of us (the elect) perish..." R.C. Sproul, Chosen By God.

2. Why evangelize if all this is predetermined by God and sure to happen anyway?

3. Perseverance of the Saints

There is no question—all those whom the Holy Spirit calls ultimately persevere to the end.

- Ephesians 1:13, 14. The Holy Spirit is the guarantor of Christ's inheritance.
- Romans 8:38, 39. Says unequivocally that nothing can separate us from the love of God.
- John 10:28, 29. Jesus gives us eternal life; it is impossible to have something eternally and then lose it. The Good Shepherd's grip is sufficient to make His sheep secure.

The Arminian believes that our faith saves us, and failure to continue to exercise that faith will cause us to lose our salvation. The security of our salvation affords us no license to sin.

## CONCLUSION

### Calvinism—Five Points

In response to the erroneous views of some after the Reformation what has come to be called the five points of Calvinism was formulated. It is easy to memorize according to the acrostic "TULIP."

**T** Total Depravity. The unsaved person is so affected by sin, that he/she is unable to choose God apart from the sovereign, regenerating work of the Holy Spirit. This regeneration precedes faith and repentance.

**U** Unconditional Election. God's election is not based upon any action, faith or future performance by the unsaved person, nor is it a result of God's looking into the future and choosing someone on the basis of their faith. God's setting His redemptive love on some and giving them grace is His sovereign choice.

**L** Limited Atonement. Jesus' death on the cross secured, for those whom He chose, an eternal relationship with Himself. Jesus did not die merely to provide the opportunity for salvation.

**I** Irresistible Grace. All those for whom Christ died will come to faith and repentance as a result of the work of the Holy Spirit in their hearts.

**P** Perseverance of the Saints. All those whom God has chosen are eternally secure in their relationship with Him and because of the work of the Holy Spirit, they will persevere. Christians are forgiven, and yet are often rebellious sinners, but yet the deepest desire of

their hearts is to serve Him.

It's my hope that you will grow to love these doctrinal truths as I have; they are the sweetest of the Bible. They reveal a God who loves me from before the foundation of the world, a God who loves me enough to be humiliated for me, a God who loves me enough to find me, and a God who will never throw me away. While others may choose to cry, why didn't Jesus die to save all men? I'm only left to wonder why He died for me. To God be the glory!

"The best proof that Christ will never cease to love us lies in that He never began." Geerhardus Vos

## READING ASSIGNMENT

1. Read the Essential Truths of the Christian Faith, (Sproul), sections 25-36; 56-64.
2. Read the Westminster Confession of Faith, chapters 9-10.

# Chosen by God, RC Sproul

## QUESTIONS & OBJECTIONS

### DOESN'T THE BIBLE SAY THAT GOD IS NOT WILLING THAT ANY SHOULD PERISH?

The Apostle Peter clearly states that God is not willing that any should perish.

*The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9).*

How can we square this verse with predestination? If **it** is not the will of God to elect everyone unto salvation, how can the Bible then say that God is not willing that any should perish?

In the first place we must understand that the Bible speaks of the will of God in more than one way. For example, the Bible speaks of what we call God's *sovereign efficacious will*. The sovereign will of God is that will by which God brings things to pass with absolute certainty. Nothing can resist the will of God in this sense. By his sovereign will he created the world. The light could not have refused to shine.

The second way in which the Bible speaks of the will of God is with respect to what we call his *preceptive will*. God's preceptive will refer to his commands, his laws. It is God's will that we do the things he mandates. We are capable of disobeying this will. We do in fact break his commandments. We cannot do it with impunity. We do it without his permission or sanction. Yet we do **it**. We sin.

A third way the Bible speaks of the will of God has reference to God's disposition, to what is pleasing to him. God does not take delight in the death of the wicked. There is a sense in which the punishment of the wicked does not bring joy to God. He chooses to do **it** because **it** is good to punish evil. He delights in the righteousness of his judgment but is "sad" that such righteous judgment must be carried out. It is something like a judge sitting on a bench and sentencing his own son to prison.

Let us apply these three possible definitions to the passage in 2 Peter. If we take the blanket statement, "God is not willing that any should perish," and apply the sovereign efficacious will to **it**, the conclusion is obvious. No one will perish. If God sovereignly decrees that no one should perish, and God is God, then certainly no one will ever perish. This would then be a proof text not for Arminianism but for universalism. The text would then prove too much for Arminians.

Suppose we apply the definition of the preceptive will of God to this passage? Then the passage would mean that God does not *allow* anyone to perish. That is, he forbids the perishing of people. It is against his law. If people then went ahead and perished, God would have to punish them for perishing. His punishment for perishing would be more perishing. But how does one engage in

more perish.ing than perishing? This definition will not work in this passage. It makes no sense.

The third alternative is that God takes no delight in the perishing of people. This squares with what the Bible says elsewhere about God's disposition toward the lost. This definition could fit this passage. Peter may simply be saying here that God takes no delight in the perishing of anyone.

Though the third definition is a possible and attractive one to use in resolving this passage with what the Bible teaches about predestination, there is yet another factor to be considered. The text says more than simply that God is not willing that any should perish. The whole clause is important: "but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance."

What is the antecedent of *any*? It is clearly *us*. Does *us* refer to all of us humans? Or does *it* refer to us Christians, the people of God? Peter is fond of speaking of the elect as a special group of people. I think what he is saying here is that God does not will that any of us (the elect) perish. If that is his meaning, then the text would demand the first definition and would be one more strong passage in favor of predestination.

In two different ways the text may easily be harmonized with predestination. In no way does it support Arminianism. Its only other possible meaning would be universalism, which would then bring *it* into conflict with everything else the Bible says against universalism.

#### DID JESUS DIE FOR EVERYONE?

One of the most controversial points of Reformed theology concerns the *L* in TULIP. *L* stands for *Limited Atonement*. It has been such a problem of doctrine that there are multitudes of Christians who say they embrace most of the doctrines of Calvinism but get off the boat here. They refer to themselves as "four-point" Calvinists. The point they cannot abide is limited atonement.

I have often thought that to be a four-point Calvinist one must misunderstand at least one of the five points. It is hard for me to imagine that anyone could understand the other four points of Calvinism and deny limited atonement. There always is the possibility, however, of the happy inconsistency by which people hold incompatible views at the same time.

The doctrine of limited atonement is so complex that to treat it adequately demands a full volume. I have not even given it a full chapter in this book because a chapter cannot do *it* justice. I have thought about not mentioning *it* altogether because the danger exists that to say too little about *it* is worse than saying nothing at all. But I think the reader deserves at least a brief summary of the doctrine and so I will proceed—with the caution that the subject requires a much deeper treatment than I am able to provide here.

The issue of limited atonement concerns the question, "For whom did Christ die? Did he die for everybody or only for the elect?" We all agree that the value of Jesus' atonement was great enough

to cover the sins of every human being. We also agree that his atonement is truly offered to all men. Any person who places his trust in the atoning death of Jesus Christ will most certainly receive the full benefits of that atonement. We are also confident that anyone who responds to the universal offer of the gospel will be saved.

The question is, “For whom was the atonement *designed*?” Did God send Jesus into the world merely to make salvation *possible* for people? Or did God have something more definite in mind? (Roger Nicole, the eminent Baptist theologian, prefers to call limited atonement “Definite Atonement,” disrupting the acrostic TULIP as much as I do.)

Some argue that all limited atonement means is that the benefits of the atonement are limited to believers who meet the necessary condition of faith. That is, though Christ’s atonement was sufficient to cover the sins of all men and to satisfy God’s justice against all sin, **it only effects** salvation for believers. The formula reads: Sufficient for all; efficient for the elect only.

That point simply serves to distinguish us from universalists who believe that the atonement secured salvation for everyone. The doctrine of limited atonement goes further than that. It is concerned with the deeper question of the Father’s and the Son’s *intention* in the cross. It declares that the mission and death of Christ was restricted to a limited number—to his people, his sheep. Jesus was called “Jesus” because he would save his people from their sins (Matt. 1:21). The Good Shepherd lays down his life for the sheep (John 10:15). Such passages are found liberally in the New Testament.

The mission of Christ was to save the elect. “This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day” (John 6:39). Had there not been a fixed number contemplated by God when he appointed Christ to die, then the effects of Christ’s death would have been uncertain. It would be possible that the mission of Christ would have been a dismal and complete failure. Jesus’ atonement and his intercession are joint works of his high priesthood. He explicitly excludes the non-elect from his great high priestly prayer. “I do not pray for the world but for those whom you have given Me” (John 17:9). Did Christ die for those for whom he would not pray?

The essential issue here concerns the nature of the atonement. Jesus’ atonement included both *expiation* and *propitiation*. Ex-piation involves Christ’s removing our sins “away from” (*ex*) us. Propitiation involves a satisfaction of sin “before or in the presence of” (*pro*) God. Arminianism has an atonement that is limited in value. It does not cover the sin of unbelief. If Jesus died for all the sins of all men, if he expiated all our sins and propitiated all our sins, then everybody would be saved. A potential atonement is not a real atonement. Jesus *really* atoned for the sins of his sheep.

The biggest problem with definite or limited atonement is found in the passages that the Scriptures use concerning Christ’s death “for all” or for the “whole world.” The world for whom Christ died cannot mean the entire human family. It must refer to the universality of the elect (people from every tribe and nation) or to the inclusion of Gentiles in addition to the world of the Jews. It was a Jew who wrote that Jesus did not die merely for *our* sins but for the sins of the whole world. Does

the word *our* refer to believers or to believing Jews?

We must remember that one of the cardinal points of the New Testament concerned the inclusion of the Gentiles in God's plan of salvation. Salvation was *of* the Jews but not restricted to the Jews. Wherever, it is said that Christ died for all, some limitation must be added or the conclusion would have to be universalism or a mere potential atonement.

Christ's atonement was real. It effected all that God and Jesus intended by it. The design of God was not and cannot be frustrated by human unbelief. The sovereign God sovereignly sent his Son to atone for his people.

Our election is in Christ. We are saved by him, in him, and *for* him. The motive for our salvation is not merely the love God has for us. It is especially grounded in the love the Father has for the Son. God insists that his Son will see the travail of his soul and be satisfied. There never has been the slightest possibility that Christ could have died in vain. If man is truly dead in sin and in bondage to sin, a mere potential or conditional atonement not only *may have* ended in failure but most certainly *would have* ended in failure. Arminians have no sound reason to believe that Jesus did not die in vain. They are left with a Christ who tried to save everybody but actually saved nobody.

# Why Not Choose Everybody?

## Question

Why didn't a loving God choose everybody?

How do you harmonize with the scriptures that God's sovereign election is done apart from works of the individual, either good or bad (Rom 9:11-13) and yet He punishes those who are left in there sin and at enmity with Him. For instance I heard an Arminian once say that Calvinist are always saying that "it's not about why God didn't choose everyone, it's why did God choose anyone" (Since we all sin). Since God's election is done apart from works good or bad, is this a poor statement?

## Answer

Well, the statement "It's not about why God didn't choose everyone; it's why did God choose anyone" makes the point that none of us deserved to be elected, which is true. But the question "Why didn't God choose everyone?" is still legitimate. In one place, Paul answers the question by saying that God wanted to create some people for glory and others for destruction (Rom. 9:21-24). For reasons God does not fully explain to us, it pleases and glorifies him to have some people who are saved and some who are not.

The typical Arminian explanation for why some people are elect and some are not is that God looked down the corridor of time and foresaw faith or merit in some, but not in others. Those in whom he foresaw faith or merit he elected, the others he did not. This is what we might call "conditional election" because individuals must satisfy a condition in order to qualify for election. Paul's whole argument in Romans 9, however, refutes this conjecture rather directly.

The other issue you raise has to do with punishment. More specifically, if the reprobate are punished for their sins but the elect are not, and there is no substantive difference between the reprobate and the elect, how is that fair? The answer is that, in some sense, it is not "fair," if by "fair" we mean "equal treatment." But that does not make it untrue. Equal treatment would be for everyone to perish without mercy, or for mercy to be shown to all. But the Bible never teaches that God treats everyone equally in every instance. In fact, it demonstrates time and again that God favors some people above others, and that he does so for no apparent reason. The demand for equal treatment may seem reasonable to some modern humans, but it is not a biblical concept.

In place of equal treatment, the Bible insists that God treats everyone justly. For some, he expresses justice by punishing them for their sins. For others, he expresses justice by allowing Christ to be their substitute and punishing Christ for their sins. Justice is never compromised. But in some cases, justice is coupled with mercy, whereas in other cases it is not.

It cannot rightly be said, however, that it is unjust to show mercy to some but not all. It may seem arbitrary, but God has the right to act in manners that seem, and in fact may be, arbitrary by human standards. The more important issue is not whether or not our theology implies that God acts arbitrarily, but whether or not the Bible teaches our theology. There is no reasonable basis to reject

out of hand all theological formulations that imply that God acts arbitrarily.

In any event, the Reformed formulation is not that God acts arbitrarily, as some Arminians seem to think we believe, but that he acts according to his good pleasure. For some reason that is inscrutable but not arbitrary, God was pleased to create and choose some for glory and others for destruction. The Bible does not tell us what specifically pleased God as he elected, which makes his decision inscrutable. But it does tell us that the basis was God's good pleasure, commonly described in terms of his glory (cf. Eph. 1:12) and purpose (cf. Rom. 9:11), so that we at least know that his choice was not arbitrary.

In short, we harmonize these ideas not by knowing specifically how all the pieces work together, but rather by knowing that there is nothing inherently contradictory in the ideas despite not knowing all the details.

By Ra McLaughlin

## The Gospel According to Arminianism (DAISY)

**D**-ead but Somehow Alive: Arminians either implicitly or explicitly reject the biblical doctrine of the imputation of Adam's fallen nature and categorically deny "Total Depravity." In other words, each individual is not born inherently sinful, but becomes an enemy of God sometime after a mythical "age of accountability" when he consciously decides to rebel against divine authority. Though it is believed that the man falls at this moment, he is nevertheless supposedly able to later respond to the call of the Gospel and to choose to believe in Christ of his own free will. Thus, faith is not seen as a divine gift, but as a human virtue.

**A**-bolition of True Grace: Since man is not dead spiritually, and is somehow able to come to God of his own volition, Arminians reinterpret the Bible's doctrine of predestination as God's election of believers based upon His foreknowledge of their future choice. They also insist that God will never force any man to come to Him against his will, but will gently "woo" him into accepting His love. Consequently, salvation is ultimately a reward for the self-righteous act of believing on the part of the sinner rather than the outpouring of the unconditional grace of God.

**I**-mpotent Savior: Since they do not believe that the salvation of the individual believer was predetermined by God's eternal decree, Arminians necessarily deny that Christ's redemptive work was in behalf of His elect only. It was instead undertaken with the entire human race in mind, making salvation a mere possibility for all men. Such is a clear denial of the Bible's doctrine of an accomplished redemption and reduces the Son of God to a soteriological imposter who, in dying on the cross, invited all, but saved none. It also denigrates His Blood to a means to an end, rather than the end itself.

**S**-overeignty of the Sinner: Arminians have no concept of the sovereignty of God due to their insistence that His plans and desires may be thwarted and altered by the whims of sinful men. Stressing in their evangelistic efforts that God does not wish any man to perish, they nevertheless believe that anyone can reject God's gift of eternal life no matter how fervently He may attempt to bestow it upon the objects of His affection. Since the desires of the creature can obviously take precedence over the decrees of the Creator, God becomes the servant of man rather than vice versa, and is merely a passive observer of worldly events, rather than the active Director thereof.

**Y**-ielding Eternal Uncertainty: Arminians who remain consistent with their beliefs also reject the biblical concept that genuine salvation is eternally secure and cannot be lost. If salvation is the individual choice of the believer, then it follows that it can also be terminated by a similar act of the will. A God who is not sovereign in bestowing eternal life cannot be sovereign in preserving it and must again submit Himself to the whims of human autonomy. And so, in direct contrast to biblical soteriology, Arminianism is completely man-centered from beginning to end and for this reason must be rejected as the very dangerous heresy that it is.

# Reformed Theology

## Class 4

### **The God of Grace - Election**

# ELECTION/PREDESTINATION

## 1. Every Christian has to believe in predestination and election

**Rom. 8:29** For those whom he foreknew he also **predestined** to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. **30** And those whom he **predestined** he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

**Eph. 1:5** he **predestined** us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,

**Mark 13:20** And if the Lord had not cut short the days, no human being would be saved. But for the sake of the **elect**, whom he chose, he shortened the days.

**Rom. 11:7** What then? Israel failed to obtain what it was seeking. The **elect** obtained it, but the rest were hardened,

**2Tim. 2:10** Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the **elect**, that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

# **ELECTION/PREDESTINATION**

- 1. Every Christian has to believe in predestination and election**
- 2. Your view of sin/depravity will affect your view of predestination**

# ELECTION/PREDESTINATION

1. Every Christian has to believe in predestination and election
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**Ezek. 11:19** And I will give them one **heart**, and a new spirit I will put within them. I will remove the **heart of stone** from their flesh and give them a **heart of flesh**,

**John 8:34** Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a **slave** to sin.

**2Cor. 4:4** In their case the god of this world has **blinded** the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

**1Pet. 2:9** But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of **darkness** into his marvelous **light**.

**Eph. 2:1** And you were **dead** in the trespasses and sins



# ELECTION/PREDESTINATION

## Synergistic

Salvation is accomplished as man and God cooperate. Divine Grace and the human will work together for salvation to happen.

## Monergistic

Salvation is wholly the work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration. Mankind possesses no inclination toward the Gospel in his natural state and needs Divine Grace to be enabled to believe.

Man is naturally able to understand and believe the Gospel apart from Divine enablement.	<b>Natural Ability</b>	<b>Natural Inability</b>	Man is naturally unable to understand and believe the Gospel apart from Divine enablement.
The condition for salvation is faith which man exercises of his own ability. God chooses those who choose Him.	<b>Prescient Election</b>	<b>Sovereign Election</b>	The condition for salvation is the Sovereign electing will of God alone.
Christ's redeeming work made it possible for everyone to be saved but did not actually secure the salvation of anyone.	<b>Universal Redemption</b>	<b>Particular Redemption</b>	Christ did in fact secure the salvation of His Church individually and definitely.
Man's will is free and he can successfully resist the Spirit's call.	<b>Human Resistance</b>	<b>Effectual Calling</b>	The calling of God to the elect does effect salvation infallibly.
Because faith is the necessary condition for Salvation, it can be lost when man discontinues his faith.	<b>Falling from Grace</b>	<b>Eternal Security</b>	The nature of saving faith is eternal and cannot be reversed.

# ELECTION/PREDESTINATION

1. Every Christian has to believe in predestination and election
2. Your view of sin/depravity will affect your view of predestination

—> Is God unfair/unjust if he doesn't save anyone?

**Rom. 9:14** What shall we say then? Is there injustice on God's part? By no means!  
**15** For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." **16** So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy.

# ELECTION/PREDESTINATION

1. Every Christian has to believe in predestination and election
2. Your view of sin/depravity will affect your view of predestination
3. There is so much mystery
  - God's heart... (remember “universal call”) —> Antinomy...
  - Human responsibility and the necessity of faith —> Compatibilism...

# **ELECTION/PREDESTINATION**

- 1. Every Christian has to believe in predestination and election**
- 2. Your view of sin/depravity will affect your view of predestination**
- 3. There is so much mystery**
- 4. Trust the Scriptures**

# ELECTION/PREDESTINATION

1. Every Christian has to believe in predestination and election
2. Your view of sin/depravity will affect your view of predestination
3. There is so much mystery
4. Trust the Scriptures
5. Why God wants us to know we are predestinated matters

**Eph. 1:4** even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. **In love 5 he predestined us** for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, **6 to the praise of his glorious grace**, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.

# ELECTION/PREDESTINATION

## 5. Why God wants us to know we are predestinated matters...

**My Beloved,**

Before the foundations of the world were laid, I knew you. I chose to love you—not because of anything you had done, nor anything you ever would do—but simply because I desired you as Mine. My love for you has never been earned, and so it can never be lost.

In your brightest days, I delight in you. In your darkest moments, I do not turn away. Even when you fall, when you doubt, when you run—I remain. My grace holds you fast. I did not set My affection on you because you were strong, pure, or worthy. I loved you freely, and I will keep you forever.

Nothing you do can separate you from Me. Not failure. Not fear. Not even death. I sealed you with My promise, and My Word does not break. You are safe. You are Mine.

Rest now—not in your striving, but in My finished work.

With everlasting love,

**Your Father**

# ELECTION/PREDESTINATION

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**My Beloved,**

Before the foundations of the world were laid, I knew you. I chose to love you—not because of anything you had done, nor anything you ever would do—but simply because I desired you as Mine (Eph 1:4–5, Deut 7:7–8). My love for you has never been earned, and so it can never be lost (Rom 11:6).

In your brightest days, I delight in you. In your darkest moments, I do not turn away (Jer 31:3, Is 42:3). Even when you fall, when you doubt, when you run—I remain (Rom 5:8, 2 Tim 2:13). My grace holds you fast. I did not set My affection on you because you were strong, pure, or worthy. I loved you freely, and I will keep you forever (Rom 9:16, John 6:37).

Nothing you do can separate you from Me. Not failure. Not fear. Not even death (Rom 8:38–39). I sealed you with My promise, and My Word does not break (Eph 1:13–14, Num 23:19). You are safe. You are Mine (John 10:28–29).

Rest now—not in your striving, but in My finished work (Heb 4:10, Phil 1:6).

With everlasting love,

**Your Father**

# **ELECTION/PREDESTINATION**

- 1. Every Christian has to believe in predestination and election**
- 2. Your view of sin/depravity will affect your view of predestination**
- 3. There is so much mystery**
- 4. Trust the Scriptures**
- 5. Why God wants us to know we are predestinated matters**

**Q & A**

# Reformed Theology – Class 6

## COVENANT THEOLOGY & SACRAMENTS

“It is important to remind ourselves that we are not treating the covenant motif as a central doctrine. In other words it is not a matter of reducing everything in the Bible to the covenant, but of recognizing the rich covenantal soil in which every biblical teaching takes root.”

Michael Horton – *God of Promise*

### THE COVENANT OF GRACE

1. It must first be understood that the distance between God and man is so great that there could be no relationship between them without God’s voluntary condescension which He expresses by way of covenanting with men.
2. The Bible presents a series of covenant relationships, those made with Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, and the new covenant. The question to be resolved is how these covenants relate to each other. “I will be your God and you shall be my people,” (Genesis 17:7; Exodus 6:6, 7; Leviticus 11:45; Deuteronomy 4:20). The heart of the covenant is the declaration that “God is with us.”
3. The theme “I shall be your God and you shall be my people” is developed particularly by God’s actually dwelling in the midst of His people. In Immanuel, God’s incarnate son tabernacles with His people (John 1:14). God’s people become the temple of the Lord (Ephesians 2:19-22). The great multitude of the redeemed ultimately serve the Lord day and night in His temple (Revelation 7:15).
4. God’s relationship to men before the fall is called the covenant of works or the covenant of creation.
5. Due to man’s fall, which rendered him unable to meet the conditions of the covenant of works, God established a second covenant we call the *covenant of grace* or the *covenant of redemption*.
6. The Bible often speaks of God’s bond with men prior to Christ’s work as the old covenant and after Christ as the new covenant. The old covenant is not replaced by the new, but fulfilled in it. The old covenant is promise, shadow, prophecy; the new covenant is fulfillment, reality, and realization.
  - Romans 11:17-21: Those who have come to Christ in the new covenant are grafted into the line of Israel, the ancient people of God.
  - Galatians 3:26-29 says if you belong to Christ you are Abraham’s offspring. One people of God.

- Romans 4:1, 12: Abraham is the father of all who follow in the steps of faith.
- Ephesians 2:11-14, 19: Jesus broke down the barrier wall between Jew and Gentile.
- Luke 24:13-32; 44-45: Jesus telling the disciples that it is all one story and he is the fulfillment of the covenant of grace.

7. The various covenant manifestations had different emphasis:

Noah ..... Preservation  
 Abraham ..... Promise: land, people, blessing  
 Moses ..... Law  
 David ..... Kingdom  
 Christ ..... Consummation

8. The structure of Old Testament covenants is similar to the ancient Hittite Suzeran treaties.

- Sanctions.
- Ratification or Inauguration. With the shedding of blood the parties swear malediction upon themselves if either fails to abide by the covenant. Genesis 15; Matthew 26:28.
- Sign or Seal. The identifiers which would mark the individual as a participant in the covenant. In the O.T., this sign and seal was circumcision (Genesis 17:10-13). (Deuteronomy 30:6; Romans 2:28, 29).

## DISPENSATIONALISM

### A System Antithetical to Covenant Theology

1. In 1909 with the advent of the Scofield Bible a system of theology began which failed to recognize the unity of the Bible but signified a different way that God related to man during that age. Scofield defined them as: "A period of time during which man is tested in respect to obedience to some specific revelation of the will of God." The seven dispensations are:

- Innocence. Pre-fall
- Conscience. Post-fall - Flood. Man was responsible to do all known good, abstain from all known evil, and approach God by sacrifice.
- Human Government. Noah - Man was to rule righteously.
- Promise. Abraham
- Law. Moses
- Grace or church.
- Kingdom.

2. Objections to Dispensationalism

Dispensationalism has “evolved” throughout the years, and many of its adherents have changed their theological views on key points. However, Reformed Theology would still have significant differences with some views.

- In the past, this system taught a different way of salvation for those in the Old Testament, though most do not believe this today. Old line adherents taught that those in the Old Testament were saved by keeping the law, and it is only in the New Testament age that we are saved by grace.

*“...the dispensation of the Mosaic Law, the present dispensation of grace, and the future dispensation of the millennial kingdom. We believe that these are distinct and are not be intermingled or confused, as they are chronological successive.”*

*“We believe that the dispensations are not ways of salvation nor different methods of administering the so-called Covenant of Grace. They are not in themselves dependent on covenant relationships but are ways of life and responsibility to God which test the submission of man to His revealed will during a particular time.*

*We believe that according to the “eternal purpose” of God (Eph. 3:11) salvation in the divine reckoning is always “by grace through faith,” and rests upon the basis of the shed blood of Christ. We believe that God has always been gracious, regardless of the ruling dispensation, but that man has not at all times been under an administration or stewardship of grace as is true in the present dispensation (1 Cor. 9:17; Eph. 3:2; 3:9, Col. 1:25; 1 Tim. 1:4).*

*We believe that it has always been true that “without faith it is impossible to please” God (Heb. 11:6), and that the principle of faith was prevalent in the lives of all the Old Testament saints. However, we believe that it was historically impossible that they should have had as the conscious object of their faith the incarnate, crucified Son, the Lamb of God (John 1:29), and that it is evident that they did not comprehend as we do that the sacrifices depicted the person and work of Christ. We believe also that they did not understand the redemptive significance of the prophecies or types concerning the sufferings of Christ (1 Pet. 1:10–12); therefore, we believe that their faith toward God was manifested in other ways as is shown by the long record in Hebrews 11:1–40. We believe further that their faith thus manifested was counted unto them for righteousness (cf. Rom. 4:3 with Gen. 15:6; Rom. 4:5–8; Heb. 11:7).”*  
<https://www.dts.edu/about/doctrinal-statement/>

- Dispensationalism does not recognize the distinction between the nation of Israel in the Old Testament, and the “New Israel”, the church of the New Testament. It teaches that the church is merely a parenthesis, a sort of divine plan “B”, when God deals with Christians today until he once again can return to his people, the nation of Israel when He returns to earth at the end of the world.
- The reformed view of salvation is by faith alone, but not by faith which is alone

(previously referred to under Sanctification). Faith in Christ is never alone, but bears the fruit of good works. Dispensationalism teaches that faith should produce good works, but if it doesn't, it isn't fatal. (Matthew 7: 16-23; 16:24; Luke 6:46; James 2:14, 17).

- This system of doctrine fails to recognize the significance of Christ's present reign over His kingdom.

## CONCLUSION

God's people should recognize the unity of the scriptures and read the whole Bible as the unfolding of God's redemptive plan, thankfully rejoicing that the purpose of the covenant of grace was to make a people to be His very own forever.

## THE CHURCH

*"The beauty of the Church is not its beauty but that it is loved as though it is beautiful, in spite of its ugliness, messiness, imperfections, scandals, troubles, lousy messages, long services, needless programs and failed ventures."* Mike Khandjian

1. Jesus loves the church and gave Himself up for her. The Bible describes the church as His Bride, His Body, the Temple of the living God and the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit (I Corinthians 3:16; II Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 1:22, 23).
2. The church is the apple of God's eye, His earthly habitation, and His appointed agent for carrying out His will on earth (Matthew 18:15-20; I Corinthians 12:27, 28; Ephesians 4:11-13).
3. The invisible church consists of the whole number of the elect from all ages. The visible church consists of all those who profess faith in Christ and their children.
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4. Some churches have so degenerated so as to no longer be churches of Jesus Christ.
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## THE SACRAMENTS OF THE CHURCH

1. Sacraments: The word 'sacrament' is not found in the Bible. Sacrament is a Latin word which described the fidelity oath of Roman soldiers to their leader, including a pledge not to desert when under attack.

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2. The sacraments are rich gifts of Christ to His church. They are signs and seals of the covenant grace.
    - *In the sacraments, Christ and His benefits are represented to us. In this way, they are a sign because they declare the saving grace of Christ.*
    - *In the sacraments, our relationship with Christ is affirmed. Thus they are a seal to us that the promises of Christ in the covenant are true and belong to us.*
    - *The sacraments separate those who are in the church and those who are not.*
    - *The sacraments encourage us to serve Christ sacrificially and diligently.*
  3. The sacraments are not instrumental causes of grace; the sign is not the thing signified.
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  4. The sacraments are to be always united with the preaching of the Word, practiced in the presence of the congregation, and administered by the elders of the church alone (Hebrews 5:4; I Corinthians 4:1). These are signs and seals of the body of Christ and are not to be dispensed privately.

## BAPTISM

### ITS ORIGIN

1. The scriptures command God's children to be baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost (Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:38).
2. Baptism has its origins in O.T. ceremonial cleansings. Hebrews 9:10 says that the law required different kinds of baptisms and the author of Hebrews goes on to mention three. There were sprinkling of water alone, water and ashes, oil, and blood (Hebrews 9:13, 19, 21; Numbers 19:17, 18; Exodus 24:6, 8; Leviticus 8:19, 16:14).
3. Jewish missionaries in the inter-testamental period were proselytizing Gentiles and requiring circumcision of the men and ritual baptisms (by sprinkling) of the whole family for admission into the faith.

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### ITS MEANING

1. Water baptism is the outward sign representing the baptism of the Holy Spirit, or regeneration (Matthew 3:11; Acts 11:15, 16). It is for our admission into the visible church.

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### ITS MODE

The biblical mode of baptism from apostolic times has been pouring or sprinkling. The Baptism of the Holy Spirit is always portrayed in scripture as pouring or sprinkling and never as immersion (Joel 2:28-29; Ezekiel 36:25-28; I Peter 1:2; Hebrews 10:22). Though not preferred, immersion is recognized as a legitimate mode of baptism.

1. When the heresy hunting Pharisees went out to inspect what John was doing and wondered if he was the Christ, they did so because Isaiah 52:15 tells us that the Messiah would come baptizing by sprinkling.

2. While it is widely believed that Jesus was immersed, a closer look at Matthew 3:16 and Acts 8:38 shows otherwise.

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3. When John resisted baptizing the Christ, Jesus ordered it in fulfillment of the Law. The law in view is found in Numbers 8:6, 7.

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4. Immersionists' argument that John 3:23 mandates their mode because John needed "much water" to baptize may be a case of shooting themselves with their own gun.

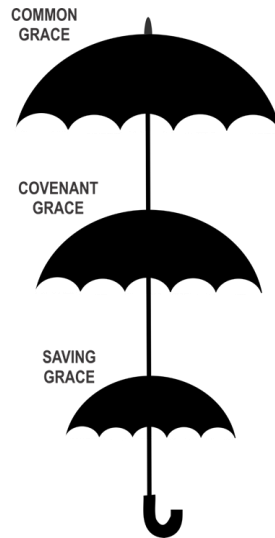
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5. If immersion is the only mode of baptism, then the UNIVERSALITY of the sacraments is destroyed.

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### ITS PARTICIPANTS

1. When God established His covenant, He appointed with it a distinguishing SIGN to mark those in the covenant. This sign in the O.T. was circumcision (Genesis 17:7-10). This sign was to be given to all the men in God's visible family and their children.
  - This covenant was everlasting and IMMUTABLE. It is clear from the beginning of Biblical revelation that God regards the children of those who believe in Him as the expected heirs of His covenant promises. So it was with Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:15), Noah (6:18), Abraham (17:7, 10-12), Moses (Deuteronomy 29:29), and David (II Samuel 7:11-16, 25). There is no evidence in the N.T. that God has changed His mind. In I Corinthians 7:14, Paul tells us that the children of the believer are HOLY (Acts 11:14).
2. In the N.T., the covenant sign becomes baptism. In Acts 2:39, Peter orders this sign for *"the promise is for you and your children"*. The church continued to circumcise and baptize until the Jerusalem Council made it clear that circumcision was no longer required. Colossians 2:11, 12 makes it clear that our baptism is Christian CIRCUMCISION, it is the outward representation of an inward faith.
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  - Acts 16:14-15: Lydia's household baptism.
3. Church history tells us that infant baptism has been practiced from the time of the apostolic church on.
4. Baptism brings our children into a special relationship with God.
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### ITS ADMINISTRATION

1. The confession is clear that baptism is to be but once administered.
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2. Baptism should not be administered to those individuals making profession of faith but who do not intend to become members of the requested congregation. *“Baptism is not to be administered to any that are out of the visible church...”* (Larger Catechism #166).
  - Ordinarily infant baptism should be administered only to covenant children of persons who are members of the requested congregation.
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### THE LORD’S SUPPER

1. On the night of His betrayal, at the Passover meal, Christ instituted the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper. He instructed the church to celebrate this “gospel drama” until His return.
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2. In the Lord’s Supper we commemorate Christ’s death. Christ is present spiritually and in no way is He present physically:
  - The Roman Church’s doctrine of trans-substantiation, which teaches that God

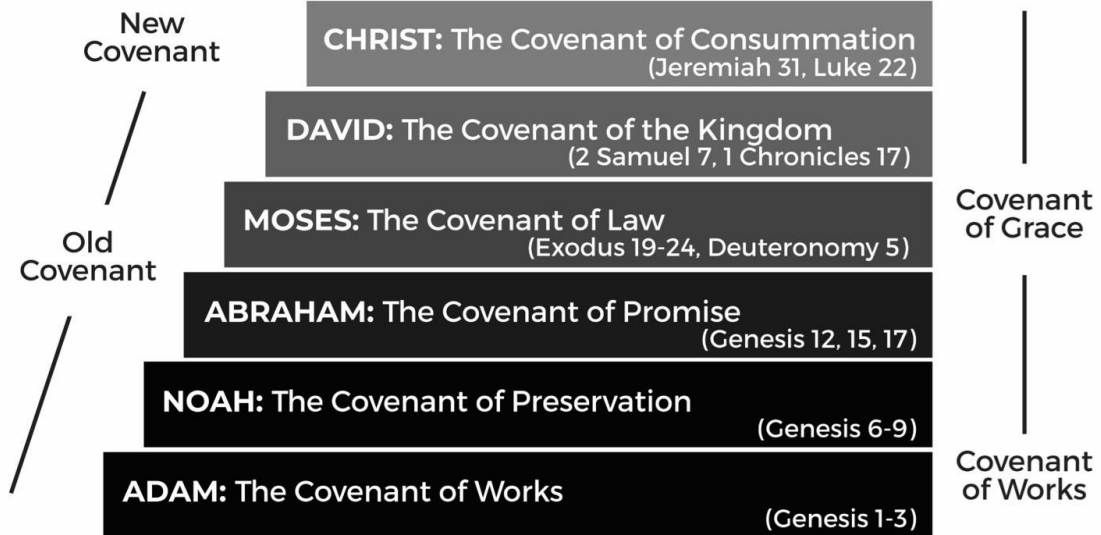
transforms the common elements of bread and wine into the actual body and blood of Christ and then offers His body as a sacrifice on the church's altar is an error of the most serious nature.

- They believe that *"The mass is the same sacrifice as the sacrifice of the cross, because in the mass the victim is the same, and the principal priest is the same, Jesus Christ."*
  - (Hebrews 7:27, 10:14; John 19:30).
  - The Lutheran doctrine of con-substantiation also falls short of the scriptural teaching. The Lutherans teach that the physical substance of Christ's body is present at the supper "in, with, and under" the bread and wine.
3. Great care should be exercised by those who partake of the sacraments. Paul says that the guilt of those who participate in an unworthy manner is to be considered tantamount to the guilt of Jesus' crucifiers.
- Covenant children (I Corinthians 11:28-34).
4. Examination and Reconciliation:
- -

## ASSIGNMENT

1. Read Essential Truths of the Christian Faith, (Sproul), sections 5; 21-24, and 75-83.
2. Read the Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapters 7 & 8, and 27-29.

## COVENANT THEOLOGY



## WHAT IS THE COVENANT OF GRACE?

### Question

Can you give me a very concise (preferably one sentence) definition of the Covenant of Grace?

### Answer

The *Covenant of Grace* is that arrangement whereby God planned to save elect man from the just consequences of his sin; namely, immorality, misery, death, and damnation.

While that is a very concise rendering of the definition of the COG, it would be wise to unpack this sentence somewhat:

- The word "covenant" means a disposition or an arrangement. This arrangement was made by God alone. This covenant was made in eternity. Man had no part in its making.
- The word "grace" essentially means undeserved favor. The grace of God is divine favor manifested to sinners who deserve just the opposite: his disfavor and wrath.

So, the *Covenant of Grace* is that arrangement whereby God planned to save elect man from the just consequences of his sin; namely, immorality, misery, death, and damnation.

The Westminster Confession of Faith states:

VII.3. Man by his fall having made himself incapable of life by that covenant (the Covenant of Works), the Lord was pleased to make a second, commonly called the covenant of grace: wherein he freely offered unto sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ, requiring of them faith in him, that they may be saved, and promising to give unto all those that are ordained unto life, his Holy Spirit, to make them willing and able to believe.

VII.4. This covenant of grace is frequently set forth in the Scripture by the name of a testament, in reference to the death of Jesus Christ, the testator, and to the everlasting inheritance, with all things belonging to it, therein bequeathed.

VII.5. This covenant was differently administered in the time of the law, and in the time of the gospel: under the law it was administered by promises, prophecies, sacrifices, circumcision, the paschal lamb, and other types and ordinances delivered to the people of the Jews, all fore-signifying Christ to come, which were for that time sufficient and efficacious, through the operation of the Spirit, to instruct and build up the elect in faith in the promised Messiah, by whom they had full remission of sins, and eternal salvation, and is called the Old Testament.

VII.6. Under the gospel, when Christ the substance was exhibited, the ordinances in which this covenant is dispensed, are the preaching of the Word, and the administration of the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper; which, though fewer in number, and administered with more simplicity and less outward glory, yet in them it is held forth in more fullness, evidence, and spiritual efficacy, to all nations, both Jews and Gentiles; and is called the New Testament. There are not, therefore, two covenants of grace differing in substance, but one and the same under various dispensations.

Thomas Watson in his *A Body of Divinity* unpacks this even further saying:

**Q-20:** DID GOD LEAVE ALL MANKIND TO PERISH IN THE ESTATE OF SIN AND MISERY?

**A:** No! He entered into a covenant of grace to deliver the elect out of that state, and to bring them into a state of grace by a Redeemer.

'I will make an everlasting covenant with you.' Isa 55:5. Man being by his fall plunged into a labyrinth of misery, and having no way left to recover himself, God was pleased to enter into a new covenant with him, and to restore him to life by a Redeemer.

The great proposition I shall go upon is, that there is a new covenant ratified between God and the elect.

What is the new covenant?

It is a solemn compact and agreement made between God and fallen man, wherein the Lord undertakes to be our God, and to make us his people.

What names are given to the covenant?

(1.) It is called the covenant of peace in Ezek 37:26, because it seals up reconciliation between God and humble sinners. Before this covenant there was nothing but enmity. God did not love us, for a creature that offends cannot be loved by a holy God; and we did not love him, since a God that condemns cannot be loved by a guilty creature; so that there was war on both sides. But God has found out a way in the new covenant to reconcile differing parties, so that it is fitly called the covenant of peace.

(2.) It is called a covenant of grace, and well it may; for,

- It was of grace, that, when we had forfeited the first covenant, God should enter into a new one, after we had cast away ourselves. The covenant of grace is *tabula post naufragium*, as a plank after shipwreck.' Oh the free grace of God, that he should parley with sinners, and set his wisdom and mercy to work to bring rebels into the bond of the covenant!

- It is a covenant of grace, because it is a royal charter, all made up of terms of grace; that God will cast our sins behind his back;' that he will love us freely;' Hos 14:4; that he will give us a will to accept of the mercy of the covenant, and strength to perform the conditions of the covenant. Ezek 36:67. All this is pure grace.

#### Why should God make a covenant with us?

It is out of indulgence, favour, and regard to us. A tyrant will not enter into a covenant with slaves, he will not show them such respect. God's entering into a covenant with us, to be our God, is a dignity he puts upon us. A covenant is *insigne honouris*, a note of distinction between God's people and heathens. I will establish my covenant with thee.' Ezek 16:60. When the Lord told Abraham that he would enter into a covenant with him, Abraham fell upon his face, as being amazed that the God of glory should bestow such a favour upon him. Gen 17:7.

God makes a covenant with us, to tie us fast to him; as it is called in Ezekiel, the bond of the covenant.' God knows we have slippery hearts, therefore he will have a covenant to bind us. It is horrid impiety to go away from God after covenant. If one of the vestal nuns, who had vowed herself to religion, was deflowered, the Romans caused her to be burnt alive. It is perjury to depart from God after solemn covenant.

#### How does the covenant of grace differ from the first covenant made with Adam?

(1.) The terms of the first covenant were more strict and severe. For,

- The least failing would have made the covenant with Adam null and void, but many failings do not annul the covenant of grace. I grant, the least sin is a trespass upon the covenant, but it does not make it null and void. There may be many failings in the conjugal relation, but every failing does not break the marriage bond. It would be sad, if, as oft as we break covenant with God he should break covenant with us; but God will not take advantage of every failing, but in anger remember mercy.'
- The first covenant being broken, allowed the sinner no remedy, all doors of hope were shut; but the new covenant allows the sinner a remedy: it leaves room for repentance, and provides a mediator. Jesus the mediator of the new covenant.' Heb 12:24.

(2.) The first covenant ran all upon working,' the second is upon believing.' Rom 4:4.

#### But are not works required in the covenant of grace?

Yes. This is a faithful saying, that they which believe in God, be careful to maintain good works.' Tit 3:3. But the covenant of grace does not require works in the same manner as the covenant of works did. In the first covenant, works were required as the condition of life; in the second, they are required only as the signs of life. In the first covenant, works were required as grounds of

salvation; in the new covenant, they are required as evidences of our love to God. In the first, they were required to the justification of our persons; in the new, to the manifestation of our grace.

What is the condition of the covenant of grace?

The main condition is faith.

Why is faith more the condition of the new covenant than any other grace?

To exclude all glorying in the creature. Faith is a humble grace. If repentance or works were the condition of the covenant, a man would say, It is my righteousness that has saved me; but if it be of faith, where is boasting? Faith fetches all from Christ, and gives all the glory to Christ; it is a most humble grace. Hence it is that God has singled out this grace to be the condition of the covenant.


If faith be the condition of the covenant of grace, it excludes desperate presumptuous sinners from the covenant. They say there is a covenant of grace, and they shall be saved: but did you ever know a bond without a condition? The condition of the covenant is faith, and if thou hast no faith, thou hast no more to do with the covenant, than a foreigner or a country farmer with the city charter.

Dr. Joseph R. Nally

# CONCISE THEOLOGY

A GUIDE TO  
HISTORIC  
CHRISTIAN  
BELIEFS

J. I. PACKER

 Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.  
CAROL STREAM, ILLINOIS

## COVENANT

GOD TAKES SINFUL HUMANS INTO A  
COVENANT OF GRACE

*The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."*

GENESIS 12:1-3

✚ Covenants in Scripture are solemn agreements, negotiated or unilaterally imposed, that bind the parties to each other in permanent defined relationships, with specific promises, claims, and obligations on both sides (e.g., the marriage covenant, Mal. 2:14).

When God makes a covenant with his creatures, he alone establishes its terms, as his covenant with Noah and every living creature shows (Gen. 9:9). When Adam and Eve failed to obey the terms of the covenant of works (Gen. 3:6), God did not destroy them, but revealed his covenant of grace to them by promising a Savior (Gen. 3:15). God's covenant rests on his promise, as is clear from his covenant with Abraham. He called Abraham to go to the land that he would give him, and he promised to bless

him and to bless all the families of the earth through him (Gen. 12:1-3). Abraham heeded God's call because he believed God's promise; it was his faith in the promise that was credited to him for righteousness (Gen. 15:6; Rom. 4:18-22). God's covenant with Israel at Sinai took the form of a Near Eastern suzerainty treaty, that is, a royal covenant imposed unilaterally on a vassal king and a servant people. Although that covenant required obedience to God's laws under the threat of his curse, it was a continuation of his covenant of grace (Exod. 3:15; Deut. 7:7-8; 9:5-6). God gave his commandments to a people he had already redeemed and claimed (Exod. 19:4; 20:2). The promise of God's covenant was made stronger through the types and shadows of the law given to Moses. The failure of the Israelites to keep the Mosaic covenant showed the need for a new redemption and covenant if God's people were to be truly his and he theirs (Jer. 31:31-34; 32:38-40; cf. Gen. 17:7; Exod. 6:7; 29:45-46; Lev. 11:44-45; 26:12).

God's covenant with Israel was preparation for the coming of God himself, in the person of his Son, to fulfill all his promises and to give substance to the shadows cast by the types (Isa. 40:10; Mal. 3:1; John 1:14; Heb. 7-10). Jesus Christ, the mediator of the new covenant, offered himself as the true and final sacrifice for sin. He obeyed the law perfectly, and as the second representative head of the human race he became the inheritor of all the covenant blessings of pardon, peace, and fellowship with God in his renewed creation, which blessings he now bestows upon believers. The typical and temporary arrangements for imparting those blessings were done away with through the realizing of that which they anticipated. Christ's sending of the Spirit from the throne of his glory seals God's

people as his, even as he gives himself to them (Eph. 1:13-14; 2 Cor. 1:22).

As Hebrews 7-10 explains, God brought in an enhanced version of his one eternal covenant with sinners (13:20)—a better covenant with better promises (8:6) based on a better sacrifice (9:23) offered by a better high priest in a better sanctuary (7:26-8:6; 8:11, 13-14), and guaranteeing a better hope than the former version of the covenant ever made explicit, that is, endless glory with God in "a better country—a heavenly one" (11:16; cf. v. 40).

The fulfillment of the old covenant in Christ opens the door of faith to the Gentiles. The "seed of Abraham," the defined community with which the covenant was made, was redefined in Christ. Gentiles with Jews who are united to Christ by faith become Abraham's seed in him (Gal. 3:26-29), while no one outside of Christ can be in covenant with God (Rom. 4:9-17; 11:13-24).

The goal of God's covenantal dealings is, as it always was, the gathering and sanctifying of the covenant people "from every nation, tribe, people and language" (Rev. 7:9), who will one day inhabit new Jerusalem in a renewed world order (21:1-2). Here the covenant relationship will find its fullest expression—"they will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God" (21:3). Toward this goal God's shaping of world events still moves.

The covenant framework embraces the entire economy of God's sovereign grace. Christ's heavenly ministry continues to be that of the "mediator of a new covenant" (Heb. 12:24). Salvation is covenant salvation: justification and adoption, regeneration and sanctification are covenant mercies; election was God's choice of future members

of his covenant community, the church; baptism and the Lord's Supper, corresponding to circumcision and Passover, are covenant ordinances; God's law is covenant law, and keeping it is the truest expression of gratitude for covenant grace and of loyalty to our covenant God. Covenanting with God in response to his covenanting with us should be a regular devotional exercise for all believers, both in private and at the Lord's Table. An understanding of the covenant of grace guides us through, and helps us to appreciate all the wonders of God's redeeming love.

## SACRAMENTS, NOT JUST SIGNS, Answer by Ra McLaughlin

### QUESTION

Regarding the sacraments, how would one use the Scriptures to teach a skeptic that communion and baptism are more than just signs, but a means of grace as well?

### ANSWER

Insofar as the sacraments are not just signs but also seals, they really promise/offer to us the benefits they depict. That promise/offer is a gracious one. Because the seal is the means by which God promises/offers the same thing to us over and over again, it is a means of grace.

Of course, the Bible doesn't explicitly say that baptism or communion are seals, but systematic theology implies it. For example, the Bible does say that circumcision is a seal (Rom. 4:11), and insofar as we see baptism replacing circumcision (Col. 2:11-12), baptism is by extension also a seal. The Lord's Supper does not specifically claim to be a seal, but the logical relationship between them implies that if one sacrament functions as a seal, so does the other. Besides this, there is the typology of the Passover, the first covenant meal that served as one means by which the Israelites were saved from the Angel of Death. Then too, a systematic study suggests to us that God would not have given the sign if the thing it signified were not true, again implying a seal aspect.

Moreover, the Bible specifically tells us that both sacraments actually accomplish things. The Lord's Supper is mentioned less frequently, but in 1 Corinthians 10:16-21 it seems clear that to partake of the Supper involves a sharing in the body and blood of Christ, as well as a mystical union with other believers in one body. Just as we would be sharers in demons (not just worshipers, but sharers, in some form of union with them) if we partook of idolatrous meals, we share in Christ when we partake of the Lord's Supper.

Baptism is mentioned frequently as a means to such things as regeneration, salvation, union in Christ's death (through which we obtain forgiveness of sins, etc.), including such places as Romans 6:3-4; Colossians 2:12; 1 Peter 3:21. We don't claim that baptism does these things on its own merit or by its own power. But the Bible does seem to indicate that it is the means by which these things take place. This really isn't any different from saying that prayer or reading the Bible is a means of grace. God uses the action of the sacrament as a way to do these things for us, or to strengthen our faith.

Finally, it is worth noting that sacraments are means of grace because of the simple fact that they are visual representations of the gospel and of God's covenant. When we see them or participate in them, we remember the truths they represent just as if we had heard them read from Scripture. Hearing and seeing God's Word is a means of grace because it reminds us of the truth and strengthens our faith by that remembrance. It can also be the means the Holy Spirit uses to teach us, to rebuke us, to bring us to repentance, etc. All believers ought to be able to

say that the sacraments are means of grace, at least in this sense.

## AGE OF ACCOUNTABILITY

### QUESTION

Is there an "age of accountability"? If so, how would you define it?

### ANSWER

The "age of accountability" is a concept that appears in some Reformed arguments (it is part of the "old Princeton" view), as well as in many non-Reformed arguments. It is generally considered to be the age at which God begins to hold a child accountable for his or her actions, such that the child is capable of committing sin that God reckons to the child's account.

There is some merit to this position: For one thing, those who have been given greater "light," that is, who have more knowledge of right and wrong, are judged more severely when they sin. One place we see this principle is in Romans 7:7ff. where Paul teaches that knowledge of the Law causes us to sin more (cf. Rom. 3:20: "Through the Law comes the knowledge of sin"). Correspondingly, those with no knowledge of the Law whatsoever do not sin as greatly. Second, those who sin unwittingly or unknowingly are less culpable than those who sin knowingly or defiantly (e.g. Num. 15:22ff.; Josh. 20:1-9). Certainly the younger a child is, the more he or she lacks knowledge of what is and is not sin, so that at least some of the bad things he or she does are done without the knowledge that these things are sins. This also reduces the culpability of children. Third, God himself seems to show compassion even on the children of unbelievers on the basis of their ignorance. We see this in Jonah 4:11 where God explains his compassion on Nineveh partly in terms of the fact that there were more than 120,000 people who did not know their right hand from their left. Probably, this should be taken as a reference to children who are too young to distinguish between right and left.

While I agree that the culpability of children is much less than that of others in light of these points, in my opinion the argument does not seem sufficient to demonstrate that children have no sin or guilt whatsoever. For example, even though Paul teaches that knowledge of the Law inspires sin, he still believes that those who do not have the Law are sinners who will die without the Law (Rom. 2:12). Further, in the places in Scripture where people are less guilty because they lack knowledge, they still bear some guilt, and thus must still repent, render an offering for it, etc. (e.g. Lev. 4:2ff.; Num. 15:22ff.). Moreover, while God spared Nineveh with its children, he elsewhere commanded the deaths of infants (Deut. 20:13-18; Josh. 6:17ff.; etc.).

It is my understanding that there is no "age of accountability," *per se* (unless we place it at the moment of conception). Rather, it seems to me that in Scripture all people start with guilt and accountability by virtue of Adam's imputed sin. Each person then gradually increases his guilt and accountability as he grows in knowledge and understanding.

Answer by Ra McLaughlin

## UNBREAKABLE

### QUESTION

Concerning the topic of baptism, in Jer. 31, is the main point that the new covenant will be unbreakable? And if so, why, as in the PCA book of church order, do we say when baptizing our children that they will grow up to either be covenant breakers or covenant keepers?

### ANSWER

No, the new covenant is not unbreakable -- at least not yet. The "new covenant" is better translated "renewed covenant" (both the Hebrew and Greek words for "new" in the phrase "new covenant" may be translated either way). The point that Jeremiah makes in Jeremiah 31:31-34 is that since the covenant has been broken, it needs to be renewed. That's why the mention of "which they broke." Nevertheless, through Jeremiah God does offer that he will forgive all his people and make sure they all know him.

We are currently in the new covenant (cf. Heb. 8), but we have not yet received all the blessings of that covenant. For example, we still have to teach people about God. It is not the case that everyone knows him, or that all the elect have been converted. Only when this happens will we be able to say that everyone knows the Lord and is forgiven. As with all the covenant blessings, we await Christ's return for the ultimate fulfillment of this great hope. At that time, Christ will purge the wicked from his people and glorify believers. This is how we will end up with a people of God in which it can be said that everyone knows the Lord.

The PCA BCO speaks of baptizing in these terms because it rightly understands that the visible church is in covenant with God and that our children are part of the visible church. When we baptize anyone, including our children, one of the things we signify is that the person baptized is in covenant with God. If that person rejects Christ, he/she is accountable to fulfill all the stipulations of the covenant on his own (one of which, of course, is to receive Christ!) -- this is the same as being without Christ outside the church, except that being in covenant with God places us in line for greater judgment. If the person baptized receives Christ, he/she is counted a covenant keeper in Christ and inherits the full covenant blessings (in due time).

Regarding the new covenant, it may be helpful to mention that the Hebrew and Greek words for "new" may also be translated "renewed." Being Reformed, I prefer this second translation because it highlights the fact that there is one covenant under various administrations rather than multiple covenants. In the Bible we see covenant renewal taking place at such times as when God reaffirms his commitment to his people and when he restores his covenant people to a good relationship with him after they have been disciplined. So in one sense, the covenant in the Old Testament was regularly being "renewed."

When Jeremiah spoke of the coming "new covenant," he was looking forward to the time when God would restore Israel to a right relationship with himself after having disciplined them in exile. When the restoration began (at the Cyrus Decree), God did begin to renew his covenant with Israel in some very significant ways: he allowed the people to return to the Promised Land; he allowed the temple to be rebuilt; he began blessing the works of their hands; he offered to install Zerubbabel as Davidic king. But because the people did not remain faithful even in the midst of this renewal process, God did not follow through with all of the blessings that he had offered to give them in the renewal. As a result, while some renewal and blessings were realized, the restoration effort ultimately failed and renewal was not finally had. The restoration continued the pattern of Israel's history: God was faithful, God was merciful, God gave and blessed; but the people rebelled and thus did not receive the full covenant blessings.

When Christ came, his work achieved what Israel's past's works had not. He kept the terms of the covenant and thus secured full covenant renewal. The prior "renewals" had all been partial and ephemeral because the people had never managed to keep the covenant. But Christ's work was different. His obedience was complete, and his administration of the covenant is lasting. Thus, the covenant renewal under his administration will be a complete renewal. I say will be because it isn't finished yet. We have begun in earnest the final process of restoration and covenant renewal, but we have yet to realize many of the blessings offered in the new covenant (such as the resurrection of our bodies, our glorification, the final judgment and destruction of Christ's enemies, the new heavens and earth, etc.). It is right to say that we are now in the new or renewed covenant, but it is also important to realize that we still need Jesus to come back before the renewal will really be complete.

Answer by Ra McLaughlin

# INFANT BAPTISM

## QUESTION

I'm studying the paedobaptism issue, and I'm using many traditional and popular works from both credobaptists and paedobaptists. To date, I find the Reformed Baptist stuff to be the most biblical. It just seems to fit better than the paedobaptism reasoning, but I'm open to change. How one understands the covenants and their fulfillment, etc., would appear to be crucial. Any thoughts?

## ANSWER

I know this can be a really tough subject -- I myself was a Baptist for 25 years or so! In fact, most Presbyterians I know used to be Baptists. I also agree that much of what has been written over the years fails to address some of the concerns that I thought were most important when I was a Baptist. For example, R.C. Sproul basically argues from church history. While I love R.C. (I used to work for him at Ligonier), I just don't find this argument very compelling from a *sola Scriptura* perspective. Many other authors argued from assumptions carried over from the old covenant, but I had not yet come to the solid conclusion that the old covenant was the same covenant as the new covenant, and most authors do not present or defend this fact. Then too, they nearly all mentioned the probability that infants were present in the household baptisms.

For me, the most critical interpretive questions that I needed answered were:

1. Why doesn't the Bible explicitly teach either paedobaptism or credobaptism?
2. What would the assumptions of the original audience have been in the absence of any explicit teaching on this subject?
3. Does the Bible anywhere demonstrate what the original audience assumed?

The most critical theological questions that pertained to the issue were:

1. What does baptism symbolize?
2. Can the new covenant be broken?

What finally turned me into a Presbyterian were the answers to these questions. First, I came to conclude that the new covenant was simply a renewal of the old covenant, not a completely different covenant. I also came to conclude that the Bible taught that the new covenant could be broken (from many of the same texts from which people erroneously argue that salvation can be lost). Since salvation cannot be lost, and since the new covenant can be broken, then there must be people in the new covenant who are not saved. For me, this removed the objection that any covenant sign ought only to be applied to believers. The implication became that it ought to be applied to all covenant members. Then, it became easy to assume that the same covenant rules which applied to the old administrations of the covenant still applied in the new administration of the covenant. (There is a related point on which I still differ from many Reformed thinkers: I do not believe that any portion of the law has been abrogated, but that Jesus continues to fulfill on our behalf those portions which we are no longer to do ourselves, such as animal sacrifice,

etc. My view of the Law presents an even stronger case for paedobaptism than some of the more traditional statements on the Law do.)

As I looked at the New Testament for help, I was a bit surprised to find that it nowhere explicitly teaches that baptism is "an outward sign of an inward change." I still believe this is one valid aspect of its symbolism (implied in texts such as Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12; 1 Pet. 3:21), but not that its symbolism is limited to this. Colossians 2:11-12 was a text I thought the Presbyterians used unfairly at first, but in time I came to agree that the implication of that text is that baptism now accomplishes what circumcision used to accomplish, and thus that it really is the new covenant sign. As a covenant sign, I came to believe that baptism symbolizes the entire covenant, not just one particular covenant blessing, and not even all covenant blessings alone. Rather, the implication would be that, like circumcision, it symbolizes both covenant blessings and covenant curses.

Finally, on the hermeneutical front, I was struck by Lydia's household baptism in Acts 16:14-15. This was not because I assumed there were children present (though it does seem odd to me to think that there were no children present in any of the households that were baptized), but rather because of Luke's choice of words. That is, Luke says that Lydia believed, and indicates that on that basis her household was baptized. In saying that the household was baptized, Luke never differentiates believers from unbelievers. Regardless of the age of those in the household, they were apparently all baptized. Because Luke does not distinguish between believers and unbelievers in the household, it indicates to me that he assumed that their belief or unbelief was immaterial to the question of whether or not they should be baptized. The important issue was the belief of the head of the household.

Two more theological points that impact the discussion, particularly with regard to breaking the new covenant, are the way the new covenant and its blessings are revealed and applied to believers, and the conditionality of all covenants. Ultimately, the covenant will become unbreakable, but only when Jesus returns and gives us all the covenant blessings. Until then, we partake of blessings only partially, and the covenant remains breakable. A good book on this idea is *The Coming of the Kingdom* by Herman Ridderbos.

On the point that all covenants are conditional, there has been much confusion because of the unfortunate teaching that has existed within the Reformed tradition that some covenants were unconditional (Noahic, Abrahamic, Davidic) while others were conditional (Adamic, Mosaic). Meredith Kline popularized this view, but did so on faulty data. As is reflected even in good study Bibles, for many years research seemed to indicate that in the ancient Near East there was such a thing as an unconditional "royal land grant treaty." The conclusion that these were unconditional, however, was based on covenant boundary marker stones that sounded unconditional and contained no curses. More recently, though, they dug up these stones to study them further. What they found was that on the portions of the stones buried under the ground by time, these treaties contain stipulations and curses, indicating that these treaties really were conditional. But this is perhaps a point that will continue to be debated as people

discover more data, reinterpret existing data, etc.

More importantly, the Bible itself lists explicit stipulations and curses in conjunction with the supposedly unconditional biblical covenants (e.g. uncircumcision results in being cut off from Abraham's people in Gen. 18; death penalty for murderers in Gen. 9; fidelity to God in 2 Chron. 6:16; etc.) Thus, there really is no good case that any biblical covenant was unconditional. This is most obvious in the case of the new covenant, where Jesus himself had to die in order to receive the covenant curses due us in order to gain the covenant blessings for us. To me, it is somewhat curious that the view that some covenants were conditional (Adamic, Mosaic) and others unconditional (Abrahamic, Mosaic, Davidic) has become ingrained in a tradition (Reformed) that claims there is really only one covenant in various administrations. How does the same covenant ping-pong between being conditional and unconditional?

Anyway, baptism is certainly an issue that is not so clearly presented in Scripture that believers cannot reasonably disagree on it. And you can see from what convinced me that my own views are not entirely identical to those of others in the paedobaptism camp. Different arguments convince different people. The ones I have mentioned are just the ones that convinced me, and are largely based on implication and assumption (as are, by the way, credobaptism arguments). I still know, respect and love a great many Reformed Baptists, and it seems to me that the same issues that prevent them from being paedobaptists are things like the assumption that the new covenant cannot be broken and that baptism is only an outward sign of an inward change. I also know a great many paedobaptist who seem to hold to paedobaptism for insufficient reasons, but I love them too.

Answer by Ra McLaughlin

# BAPTISM VS. DEDICATION

## QUESTION

How would you answer a Reformed Baptist concerning the following question: I have a newborn and I want to better understand paedobaptism. What is the difference between dedicating your child in the Sunday morning service and baptizing your child? If I am a covenant member and my child receives certain blessings because of my faith in Christ, what is she "missing out on" because she is not baptized?

## ANSWER

There are a couple important differences between dedication and baptism in general.

First, the Bible instructs us to baptize people but it does not instruct us to dedicate them. There are examples of people dedicating themselves to the Lord, as in Exodus 32:29 where the 3,000 Levites who killed their idolatrous brothers dedicated themselves to God. Notice, though, that this dedication was a specific call to a particular job or life. The same is true in the example of Samuel's "baby dedication" in 1 Samuel 1: Samuel was given into the priest's care for his upbringing, so that he grew up in the temple rather than in his parents' home (1 Sam. 1). This is not to say that Reformed Baptist baby dedications are wrong - they don't violate anything in Scripture, and the sentiment is a godly one. Rather, it is to say that there is no scriptural basis for the practice as a distinct rite.

Second, baptism is a covenant sign that ratifies, as it were, the covenant between God and the individual (this is generally admitted by Reformed Baptists when it comes to credobaptism). In the Bible, dedications also function as a form of vow or covenant, obligating the individuals dedicated to a particular course of action. But dedications obligate people to lesser vows or covenants, whereas baptism obligates one to *the* covenant, that is, to God's covenant with his people.

So, dedications (regardless of the age of the one dedicated) are not bad, and they can be good. But they cannot replace baptism because they are neither commanded in Scripture nor an aspect of God's overarching covenant with his people.

Now, for the specific question of the unbaptized covenant member, it is important to look at circumcision in the Old Testament in order to understand the modern Presbyterian position. In the Old Testament, circumcision was the sign of covenant membership. Those males who were not circumcised were to be cut off from their people, estranged from the covenant blessings and subject to its curses (Gen. 17:14) - heavy stuff for an infant who didn't have a say in it, but still the way it was. Also, the parents who failed to circumcise their children were in grievous sin - God almost killed Moses for failing to circumcise his son, but Zipporah's intervention saved Moses (Exod. 4:24-26). Moreover, God did not allow the adult Israelites to inherit the Promised Land (a covenant blessing) until they had been circumcised (Josh. 5:2ff.). These facts indicate

that circumcision in the Old Testament was very serious business, and that the blessings of the covenant hung in the balance. With such a severe attitude toward the covenant sign in the Old Testament, we should expect baptism to be a serious issue for the church in the New Testament era, both for adults and for children.

Reformed Presbyterians do not generally teach that an unbaptized person cannot receive the covenant blessings and must be doomed to hell - that conclusion is inconsistent with the doctrine of salvation by faith alone in Christ alone. However, we do teach that it is now a sin not to be baptized just as it used to be a sin not to be circumcised, and most Reformed Baptists I know agree with this position with regard to believers. That circumcision was treated as such a serious sin in the Old Testament, and that realization of the covenant blessings was tied explicitly to it, implies that failure to be baptized is now a serious sin and that the realization of some covenant blessings in this world is tied to baptism.

Reformed Presbyterians argue that the same significance and obligation attaches to infant baptism that attaches to believer baptism. If it is a sin not to be baptized as a believer, it is also a sin not to be baptized as an infant and not to have your infant baptized. Of course, this conclusion is based on the idea that the children of believers are in covenant with God, which many Reformed Baptists deny. We might say that the difference between Reformed Baptists and Reformed Presbyterians is many times an issue of ecclesiology rather than of sacramentology.

From a Reformed Presbyterian perspective (which I believe to be the correct perspective), an unbaptized child of a modern believer is in a similar position to an uncircumcised infant in the Old Testament - he or she has broken God's covenant (Gen. 17:14). Christ keeps covenant perfectly for believers, so that all our sins are forgiven and we are ultimately blessed in him. But at the same time, our actions of covenant breaking and covenant keeping also have repercussions in this life (cf. Ps. 1). God is more inclined to bless us in this life if we keep his covenant, and less inclined to bless us if we do not (all other things being equal). So, an unbaptized child of a believer "misses out" by being less likely to receive some of God's covenant blessings in this life. The parents are in a similar position, just as Moses was in Exodus 4:24-26, being less likely to be blessed in this life and more likely to be disciplined.

Answer by Ra McLaughlin

# Reformed Theology

## Class 6

### **COVENANT THEOLOGY & SACRAMENTS**

# Covenant Theology

**“Covenant” = In Bible ~300 times**

**Covenant = a bond in blood sovereignly administered**

**Bond = a promise or commitment that is made to one another**

**In blood = used animals to signify the promise is a matter of life and death**

**Sovereignly administered = initiated by God by his own desire and power**

- **P: PROMISE**
- **R: REQUIREMENT**
- **S: SIGN**

# Covenant Theology

- New Covenant**
- P: Fulfilled all promises
  - R: Believe/Receive/Follow
  - S: Baptism & Lord's Supper
- Old Covenant**
- P: Everlasting King/Salvation - David's line
  - R: Faithfulness
  - S: Throne
- P: God's chosen & precious children
  - R: Keep law and commandments
  - S: Passover
- P: Land/People/Blessing
  - R: Believe & Circumcision
  - S: Circumcision
- P: Saved - Never flood again
  - R: Build boat - animals
  - S: Rainbow
- P: Rel w/ God-Fill/subdue earth
  - R: Perfect righteousness
  - S: Sabbath day of rest

**CHRIST: The Covenant of Consummation**  
(Jeremiah 31, Luke 22)

**DAVID: The Covenant of the Kingdom**  
(2 Samuel 7, 1 Chronicles 17)

**MOSES: The Covenant of Law**  
(Exodus 19-24, Deuteronomy 5)

**ABRAHAM: The Covenant of Promise**  
(Genesis 12, 15, 17)

**NOAH: The Covenant of Preservation**  
(Genesis 6-9)

**ADAM: The Covenant of Works**  
(Genesis 1-3)

Covenant  
of Grace

Covenant  
of Works

# Covenant Theology

**Bible = ONE STORY of God's grace**

**From Promise to Fulfillment in Christ**

**Luke 24:25** And he said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! **26** Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?” **27** And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

**Luke 24:44** Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.”

**John 5:39** You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me,

# Covenant Theology

## OT - Saved same way as in NT

**Rom. 3:21-22, 25** But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— **22** the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. **25** whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins.

**Rom. 4:2-3, 13** For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. **3** For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness." **13** For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith

- **P: PROMISE**
- **R: REQUIREMENT**
- **S: SIGN**

# Covenant Theology

**Col. 2:17** These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ.

- P: Fulfilled all promises
- R: Believe/Receive/Follow
- S: Baptism & Lord's Supper

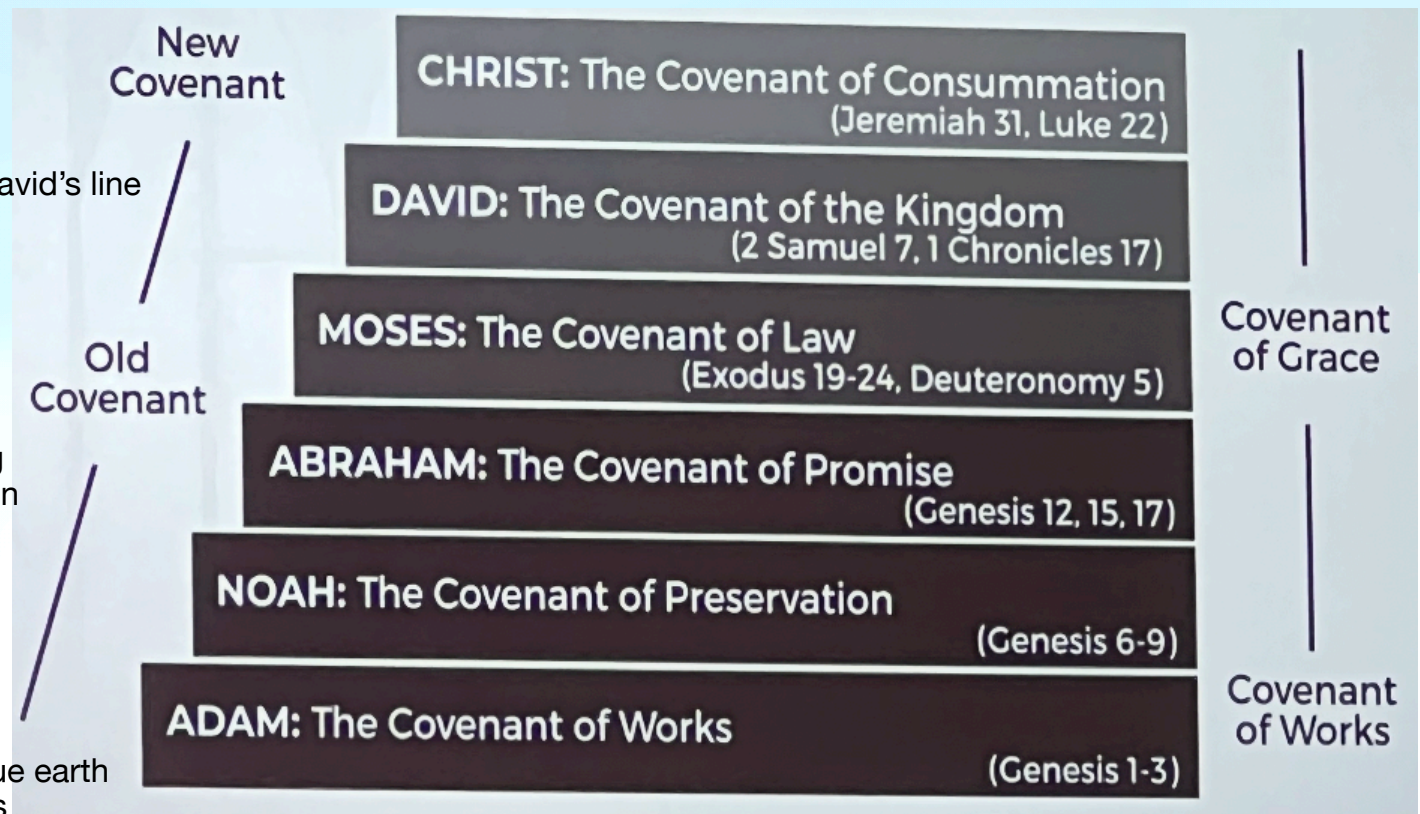
- P: Everlasting King/Salvation - David's line
- R: Faithfulness
- S: Throne

- P: God's chosen & precious children
- R: Keep law and commandments
- S: Passover

- P: Land/People/Blessing
- R: Believe & Circumcision
- S: Circumcision

- P: Saved - Never flood again
- R: Build boat - animals
- S: Rainbow

- P: Rel w/ God-Fill/subdue earth
- R: Perfect righteousness
- S: Sabbath day of rest



# Covenant Theology

***God's Created Image Bearers***

***God's Covenant People***

***God's Elect***



# Covenant Theology

## *God's Created Image Bearers*

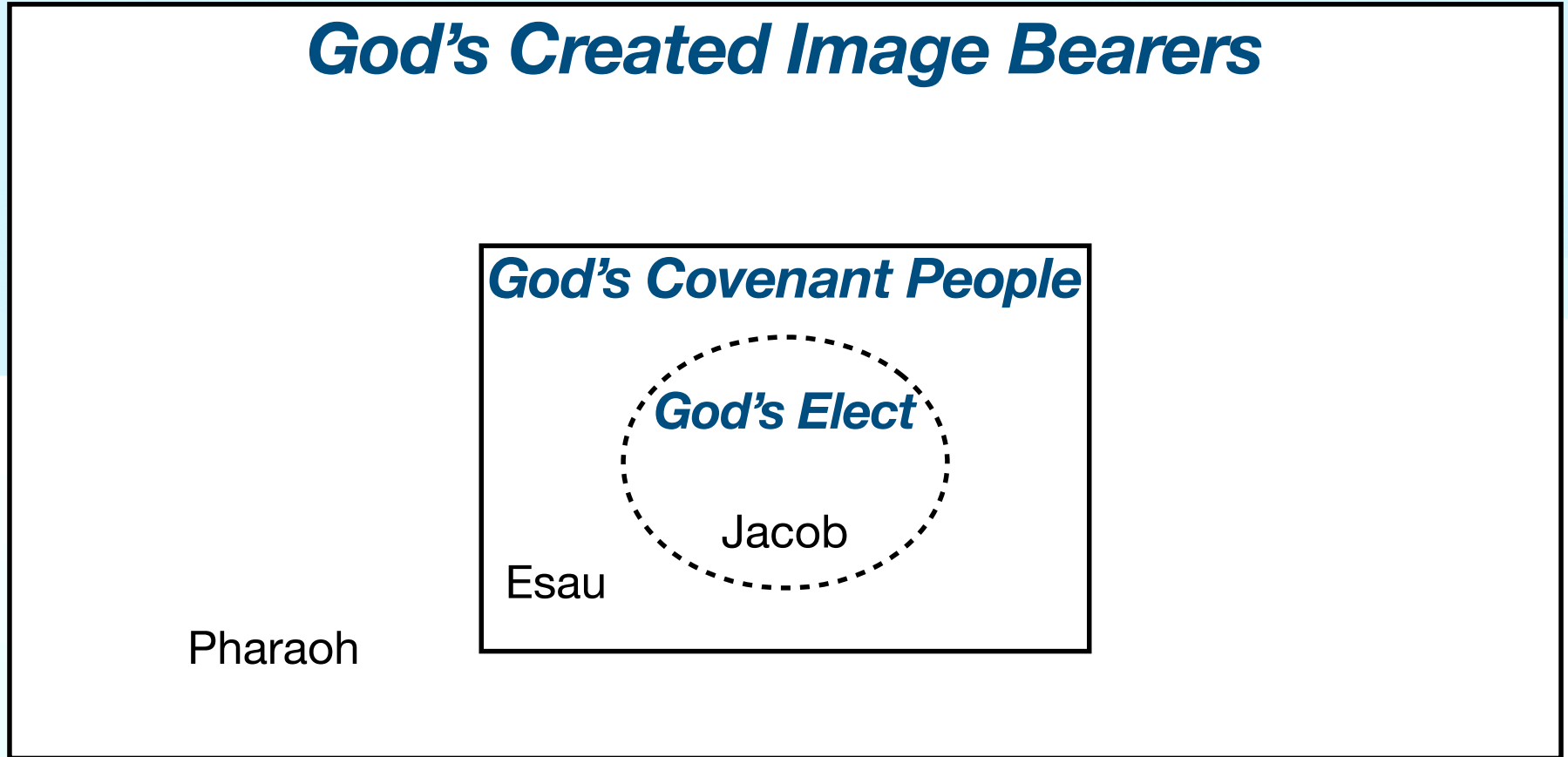
### *God's Covenant People*

*God's Elect*

Jacob

Esau

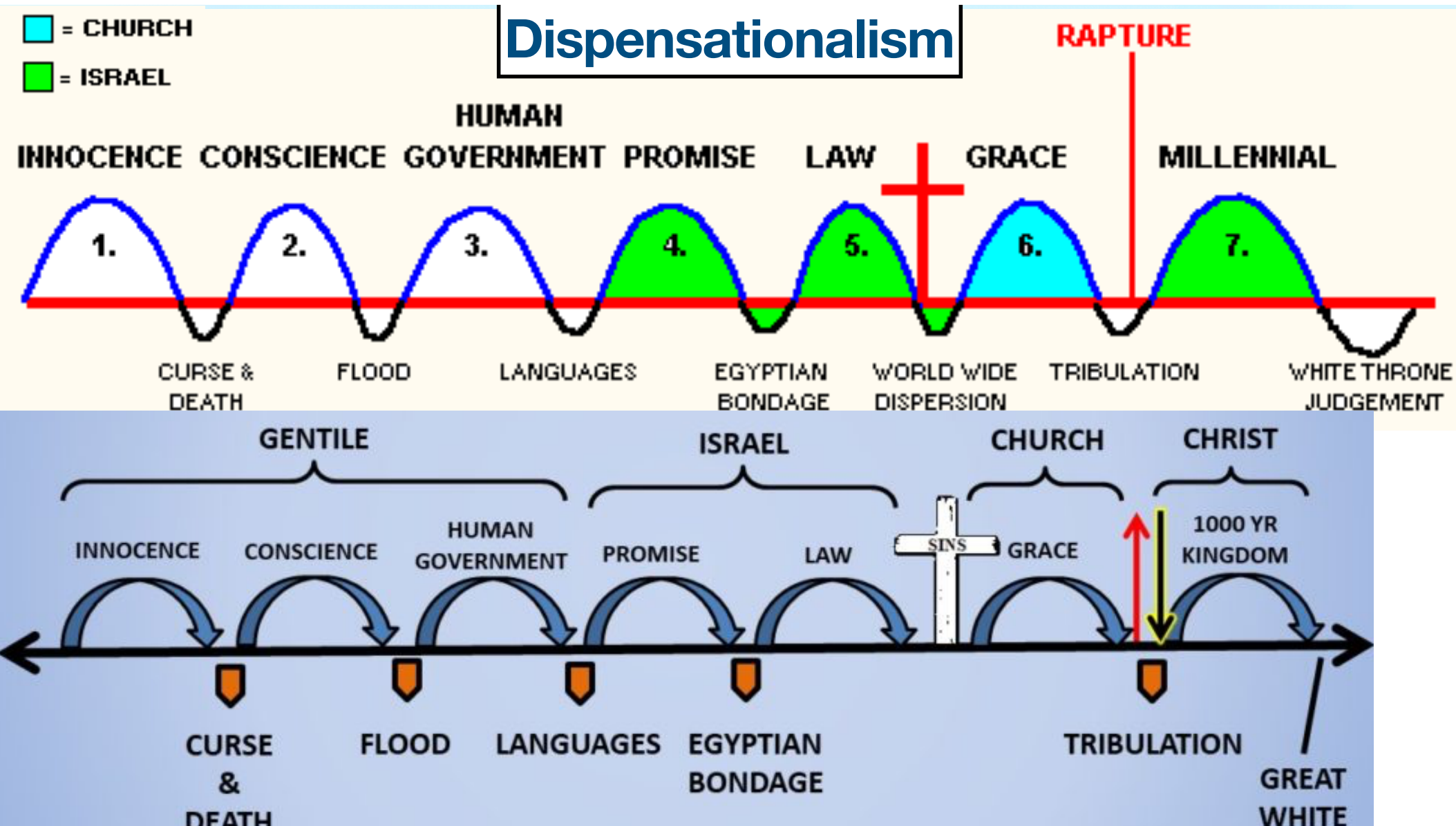
Pharaoh



■ = CHURCH

■ = ISRAEL

# Dispensationalism



# Dispensational view of Cultural Transformation



# The Church

## ***God's Created Image Bearers***

- Marks:
- Bible
  - Sacraments
  - Church Discipline

***Visible Church***

***Invisible  
Church  
(God's Elect)***

*All who profess  
faith in Christ*

# The Church

*OT*

*Circumcision*

*Passover*



*NT*

*Baptism*

*Lord's Supper*

# Reformed Theology

## Class 6

### **COVENANT THEOLOGY & SACRAMENTS**